

Community Involvement – Atomic City - Idaho

As requested during our March 21, 2007, Mid-Point Review Briefing, in Washington, D.C., please find our brief summary of the EnergySolutions' team Community Involvement activities. These activities were undertaken in support of soliciting opinion(s) regarding the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) siting study for the Atomic City, Idaho site under award DE-FG07-07ID14801.

Overview and Summary

The meetings and information presented were well received at the three EnergySolutions public meeting locations (Idaho Falls, Pocatello, and Blackfoot). The majority of people attending the three meetings expressed their support for the GNEP Initiative and endorsed either the Atomic City or the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) proposed sites. People attending the Blackfoot meeting were not only overwhelmingly in support of the GNEP Initiative but stated very clearly that they would support either or both of the facilities, Consolidated Fuel Treatment Center (CFTC) and Advanced Burner Reactor (ABR), on the proposed Atomic City site. Several people asked if it were possible or likely that one facility, say CFTC, could be located on the Atomic City site with the Advanced Burner Reactor being on the INL. Many questions of clarification were asked and interest levels in technical aspects were high. The topics covered are captured in the summary tables for each meeting.

There was some misunderstanding by the general public, however, that there are actually two different siting studies being performed simultaneously in Idaho by two different grant recipients: the first being conducted at Atomic City by EnergySolutions, and the second, being conducted on the INL by the Regional Development Alliance (Grant # DE-FG07-07ID14797).

Representatives from the Snake River Alliance, an Idaho-based advocacy group, attended all three meetings and expressed their opposition to the GNEP Initiative and their concerns over the possible impacts to the local environment if any of the facilities were sited in Idaho.

Representatives from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe located at the Fort Hall Reservation were also in attendance at two of the three meetings. They expressed their concerns over the impacts of man's interaction with the lands, water and animals and the cost it brings with it to the environment and nature. To help in better educating the Tribal members on this new program, they expressed their interest in having additional meetings or discussions with EnergySolutions directly so that the Tribe may better understand the GNEP Initiative and EnergySolutions possible role in it. The DOE-ID representative and the Tribal representative for DOE have agreed to allow these discussions to occur outside of the public meetings.

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe also brought up discussions about the 1995 Settlement Agreement and their tribes part in the final negotiations. They discussed how communications between the DOE, the State of Idaho, and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe did not occur throughout the process which resulted in the temporary stoppage of transportation of nuclear material across their tribal lands.

Background

The Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) seeks to meet the growing demands for electricity, both nationally and globally, by developing a world-wide consensus on expanding the use of economical carbon-free nuclear energy. A plentiful and reliable supply of base-load energy is a cornerstone of economic growth and prosperity. GNEP is a comprehensive strategy to:

- Increase US and Global security;
- Reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation;
- Provide nuclear fuel services to developing nations that limit use to power generation; and
- Improve the environment.

There are three facilities that are key to the development and implementation of GNEP.

1. An Advanced Fuel Cycle Facility (AFCF) designed and directed by the U.S National Laboratories.
2. A Consolidated Fuel Treatment Center (CFTC) capable of separating the usable components in Light Water Reactor (LWR) spent fuel from the waste products.
3. An Advanced Burner Reactor (ABR) capable of production of electricity consuming the usable products from spent fuel.

In the fall of 2006, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) sought proposals from eligible entities with public or private sites interested in hosting one or both of the CFTC and ABR facilities.

Based on the submissions received by DOE, Energy**Solutions** was issued a grant award to compile publicly available data on the proposed, privately owned, Atomic City, Idaho site and document the suitability of the site in a scope and manner supportive of a National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) analysis. This site is one of 13 potential sites at 11 geographic locations.

Prior to the final grant award, DOE added in scope for the awardee to undertake **informal** community involvement activities to inform state and local stakeholders of the purpose of the GNEP siting studies.

In parallel, DOE has held public scoping meetings relating to the preparation of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) at each of the geographic locations and in some instances nearby locations. The Detailed Siting Report (DSR) from each site will be an input into the PEIS. Comments made at the Atomic City PEIS meeting were taken into consideration when planning for the Idaho community outreach activities.

Community Involvement Planning and Activities

The Atomic City site covers approximately 3,310 acres and is located in the arid, high desert rangeland of east-central Idaho, in Bingham County. The Atomic City site is 46 miles west of Idaho Falls, 32 miles east of Arco, 31 miles northwest of Blackfoot, and 40 miles northwest of Pocatello. The northern

boundaries of the Atomic City site are approximately 0.1 miles south of the southern boundary of the INL. The Atomic City site is bounded by undeveloped ranch land to the east, west, and south. The Atomic City site is wholly located in Bingham County,

Consequently the local communities in eastern Idaho supply the workforce for the INL which employs over 5,000 people in the state. The general populace is familiar with some of the basic concepts of the nuclear industry and the types of facilities that might be constructed under GNEP.

Based on direct observation of the PEIS public scoping meeting held on March 15, 2007, there was strong city, county and state official support such as:

- Congressional support: All four members of Idaho's congressional delegation expressed unequivocal support.
- State support: Letters of support from the Governor and Lieutenant Governor and State Controller were clinched with a resounding endorsement by the Idaho Legislature in the form of a joint memorial resolution.
- Community support: Area mayors representing 17 eastern Idaho cities stood together as Idaho Falls Mayor Jared Fuhrman delivered their collective backing for GNEP. County commissioners representing most of the area counties added their GNEP-in-Idaho vision, as did scores of local chapters of the Chambers of Commerce, economic development organizations, area labor and trade unions, INL retirees, INL employees, area business leaders, and ordinary citizens.

Many of the comments made during this meeting by the general public were not associated with the PEIS process and their supporting siting report input but on the potential GNEP facilities themselves and the presumed association as part of the INL.

Concerns raised during the public meetings included the impact of the 1995 Settlement Agreement on future commercial spent fuel shipments relating to the GNEP Initiative. (In October of 1995, the State of Idaho, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Department of Energy reached agreement (most often called the Batt Settlement Agreement) settling a lawsuit filed by the State too prohibit shipment of commercial spent nuclear fuel to the INL for storage.)

Other items addressed were the safe transport of nuclear materials, its storage at the facility, the processes and wastes produced, the use of natural resources, the potential environmental impact and the socioeconomic effects on the region. All of this was taken into account by Energy**Solutions** when planning their community activities.

Several locations were selected to seek community involvement:

- Idaho Falls, Idaho (the most local center of significant population ,a community of ~52,000 east of the proposed site)

- Pocatello, Idaho (the second closest center of significant population ~50,000 southeast of the proposed site)
- Blackfoot, Idaho (the county seat of Bingham County).

Meetings at these locations were planned for and held on April 10, 2007 in Idaho Falls, April 11, 2007 in Pocatello and April 12, 2007 in Blackfoot.



The meetings were publicized utilizing the three local newspapers located in each city (the *Post Register* in Idaho Falls, the *Idaho State Journal* in Pocatello, and the *Morning News* in Blackfoot). Public Notices were published in the above newspapers the week that the meetings were to be held. These notices ranged in size from a ¼ page newspaper advertisement to a ½ page newspaper advertisement (Figure 1).

The Department of Energy (DOE) chose EnergySolutions to conduct siting studies of land in Atomic City, ID to host facilities associated with the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) initiative

✓ **GROWTH** ✓ **JOBS** ✓ **STRONGER INFRASTRUCTURE** ✓ **CLEANER ENVIRONMENT**

GNEP can help facilitate the increased use of safe, clean nuclear power, which is important for the environment and for our nation's efforts to lessen our dependency on foreign sources of energy. A siting study for recycling used nuclear fuel is being performed in Atomic City, Idaho.

- The proposed site meets the required area for hosting GNEP facilities.
- Field crews have already conducted baseline ecological surveys including photographic documentation of wildlife/vegetation.
- Field surveys were conducted to collect relevant information on natural and cultural resources.

GNEP - utilizes Yucca Mountain more efficiently - combats global warming
- lessens dependence on fossil fuels - builds a secure energy future for the U.S.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

Tuesday, April 10, 2007
 6:30 - 9:30 pm
 Red Lion Hotel
 475 River Parkway, Idaho Falls

EnergySolutions will be on hand to answer any questions you may have. These informal Public Involvement Meetings are being held to raise awareness of the scope and type of facilities that GNEP will require.

We believe it is necessary to give the public an opportunity to:

- 1) be informed about the impacts of a recycling facility and
- 2) have a forum to both ask questions and voice concerns about the project.

Community support is essential and can only be achieved by open and honest communication with the public.

gnep.gov

Figure 1. Typical Newspaper Advertisement

In advance of the meetings, the *Post Register* and *Morning News* conducted interviews with the Project Manager for EnergySolutions about the upcoming meetings. This helped in gaining additional visibility to the meetings.

To help provide information at the community meetings the EnergySolutions team prepared poster boards covering

- GNEP
- The Detailed Siting Report activities, goals and objectives
- The proposed site location
- Transportation of spent nuclear fuel
- The Advanced Mixed Waste Treatment Facility (a recent EnergySolutions project)
- Sellafield, a UK site where facilities similar to the proposed GNEP facilities currently operate and EnergySolutions has access to the Intellectual Property.

Each meeting comprised an initial ‘Open House’ period followed by a presentation and then Q&A/comment session. Members of the EnergySolutions team also stayed behind to take questions from individuals after the meetings had been closed. Representatives of the press and TV attended the Pocatello & Blackfoot meetings and interviewed representatives of both EnergySolutions and the Shoshone-Bannock tribe.

The purpose of the Open House session was to provide additional information and provide the opportunity for members of the public to ask questions/give comments out of the spotlight of the meetings.

All of the community meetings were professionally facilitated, and a court reporter transcribed the interactions.

Community Involvement Opinions

The question and issues summary below was prepared by the meeting facilitator and captures all of the major items and opinions expressed during each meeting.

The majority of opinion, expressed at both the Idaho Falls and Blackfoot meetings, was in favor of GNEP and that one or both of the Idaho Sites be chosen for either or both of the CFTC or ABR facilities. People expressed support for nuclear power and recycling uranium to recover energy, as a better way to deal with spent fuel. Many of the people who spoke in favor of the siting recognized the economic benefit to the communities of the region. Several people stated that it was important to ensure the safety and security of nuclear installations but were confident that would be the case.

Support for GNEP and specifically the Atomic City site was extremely strong at the Blackfoot meeting which was also the highest attended meeting. A significant number of Atomic City residents attended

and they were completely supportive of the proposed site in Atomic City being adopted as were the local, elected representatives such as the Bingham County Commissioners, and the Mayor of Blackfoot.

It should be noted that one gentleman at the Blackfoot meeting specifically asked that we record his opposition to the GNEP facilities being located in Idaho ‘lest we thought that everyone attending that meeting was in favor.’ He thought ‘the desert was fine as it was and he was opposed to change’. His remarks brought several responses in favor of GNEP going ahead on the Atomic City site including one from a local rancher who spoke very eloquently regarding both the need for energy security in the US but also the beauty of the land and how he wanted his children and grand children to be able to enjoy it. He thought that would only be possible if they could get good paying jobs that would enable them to stay in that area. He was therefore in favor of GNEP and the Atomic City site.

The Pocatello meeting was less well attended than the other two and consequently appeared more balanced in terms of number of statements for and against GNEP. It should be noted, however, that in all three meetings many of the people who spoke against GNEP took repeated opportunities to address the meeting, and this had more impact in Pocatello due to the fewer attendees. Some of the people opposed to GNEP, such as representatives of the Snake River Alliance, attended two or all three meetings and spoke at each meeting, often more than once.

Those who expressed opinions opposing GNEP, on either of the Idaho sites, addressed economic, proliferation, environmental impact, resource utilization and waste management issues, often citing nuclear legacy issues, the problems associated with reprocessing plants in the US and ‘the poor track record of the DOE on major projects’ by way of example.

Energy**Solutions** Public Information Meetings:
Questions and Issues Raised by Participants

Idaho Falls Public Information Meeting
April 10, 2007

Number of attendees: 34

- Idaho Settlement Agreement – implications and prospects for negotiation
 - DOE project risk – poor track record on completing projects
 - Public/private partnerships – how would they work?
 - Water rights
 - Impact of “water calls” on water rights
 - Water usage – when will the water requirements for the recycling and reactor facilities be available for public review?
 - DOE resistance to acknowledging past mistakes, especially with respect to reprocessing and management of associated wastes
 - Waste forms that would result from reprocessing (hulls, *etc.*)
 - Energy**Solutions** proposal – commitment to make the proposal public
 - Facility size and waste shipments
 - Supplier nations and user nations – who, specifically, would they be?
 - Relationship of GNEP to the future of nuclear power
 - Certainty of employment numbers associated with GNEP
 - Morris (Illinois) technology *vs.* the Energy**Solutions** recycling process (liquid effluents)
 - Regulatory framework for the recycling facility (NRC, DOE, *etc.*)
 - Sustainability, community impacts and changes
 - Siting of two facilities (recycling and fast reactor facilities); must they be collocated?
 - Fast reactor size and fuel consumption
 - Corporate partner for reactor construction – when will that information be available?
 - Relationship of the new facilities to the Section 3116 determination for disposal of grouted residual waste at INL
 - DOE priorities with respect to nuclear power (Spurgeon statements to House Energy and Water Subcommittee in March)
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Energy**Solutions** Public Information Meetings:
Questions and Issues Raised by Participants

Pocatello Public Information Meeting
April 11, 2007

Number of attendees: 24

- Water consumption numbers for the recycling facility – how much would it require?
 - Advanced Recycling Reactor – what is its role in the GNEP program?
 - State of Idaho position regarding the Settlement Agreement; prospects for negotiation
 - Potential for Idaho to become a *de facto* dump for spent nuclear fuel if the GNEP program fails
 - Potential for Idaho to become a dump for Hanford wastes
 - Potential for Idaho to become a spent fuel dump because of lack of DOE follow-through
 - Shoshone-Bannock Tribal sovereignty
 - Discussions between Energy**Solutions** and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
 - Source of capital for initial facility construction – information about nature of public/private partnership
 - Current ownership of Atomic City property
 - Settlement Agreement
 - Potential for reprocessing of foreign commercial fuel in Idaho
 - Differences between the two Idaho sites: Atomic City and INL (advantages and disadvantages)
 - Cost effectiveness of reprocessing – can it be economical?
 - Costs vs. liabilities of the cleanup of the THORP leak
 - Difference between GEN IV and GNEP
 - Salaries of Energy**Solutions** management
 - Burden of reprocessing here in Idaho – reprocessing for the US and other countries
 - Water rights
 - Idaho site(s) – strengths and liabilities compared to sites in other states
 - Environmental trade-offs; long-term impacts
 - Seismic concerns
 - Environmental stewardship
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Energy**Solutions** Public Information Meetings:
Questions and Issues Raised by Participants

Blackfoot Public Information Meeting
April 12, 2007

Number of attendees: 40

- Highway 26 traffic concerns – heavy traffic, two-lane road
 - Highway safety options – possibility of mass transit to the site
 - Emergency response measures
 - Schedule for down-selection of sites
 - Tribal relations/sovereignty
 - Tribal consultation with Energy**Solutions**
 - Expressions of support from other regions, governments
 - Kinds of jobs involved at a recycling facility
 - Plans for D&D after the project is complete
 - Details about the THORP leak
 - Reprocessing of commercial fuel from foreign countries
 - Educational benefits that Energy**Solutions** would offer
 - How can local groups get involved in supporting the EOI?
 - Recycling reactor – details about the design, power generation, etc.
 - Glass (vitrified product) waste disposal
 - Water use/water calls
 - Congressional funding
 - Extent to which recycling would reduce the amount of transuranics
 - Total recycling output
 - Other sites proposed by Energy**Solutions**
 - Impacts on regional infrastructure
 - Public input in NRC licensing – will there be opportunities?
 - Jobs for younger generation to enable them to stay in the area
 - Settlement Agreement – likelihood of successful negotiations
 - Need for education about nuclear energy and the benefits of recycling
 - Type of reactor that Energy**Solutions** would build – coolant, specs, etc.
 - Why is NRC regulation important?
 - Nature of the recycled product
 - Negative impacts of growth in the community/region
 - Merits of the Atomic City site
 - Why should the GNEP projects at Atomic City be commercial facilities?
 - Sequence/schedule of construction for the recycling facility and the reactor
 - Time frame for getting the projects up and running
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